


Chapter No. 2111
19/SS02/R1226
LR 17B/RC

***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 559***

Originated in Senate  Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 559

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE RECOGNITION OF THE MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE TO NEW STAGE THEATRE AS RECIPIENT OF THE 2019 GOVERNOR'S ARTS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN THEATRE.

WHEREAS, the Governor's Arts Awards Program has announced its 2019 recipients, which includes New Stage Theatre for Excellence in Theatre; and

WHEREAS, New Stage Theatre is the only professional theatre in Jackson, Mississippi, with more than 50 years in operation. Since its founding in 1965, the theatre has been committed to presenting diverse voices through its productions and casting. New Stage has a history of presenting cutting-edge plays as well as crowd-pleasing favorites. The theatre also promotes new work through its Eudora Welty New Play Series, which attracts submissions from playwrights throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, in 1965, nine Jacksonians who wanted to raise the theatrical bar in Mississippi created New Stage Theatre. Under the longtime artistic leadership of Co-Founder Jane Reid Petty, New Stage set out to provide professional, often challenging, live

theatre to a culturally diverse audience and cultivate a new generation of actors and theatregoers; and

WHEREAS, New Stage first raised the curtain in 1966 with a production of the cutting-edge drama *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*. New Stage hosted the first integrated arts audiences in Mississippi and was the first theatre in the state with a professional, full-time, paid artistic director. It also is a member of Theatre Communications Group, and operates under a Guest Artist Agreement with Actors' Equity Association. This allows the theatre to hire professional actors to appear in its productions; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, current Artistic Director Francine Reynolds took the helm and continued to build on the company's solid foundation. It is the state's only resident, professional theatre and annually presents five mainstage shows, a holiday show, a children's show, *and a summer show*. The New Stage mainstage production *and a summer show* employ 100 professional actors, designers and directors to work with the local talent pool each year; and

WHEREAS, the theatre also presents benefit shows, and readings of new works through the Eudora Welty New Plays Series and the Unframed Series, which features more contemporary plays. Each year the theatre hires and trains four actor apprentices to perform on educational tours which provide theatre to school children. New Stage also has an active education program for the

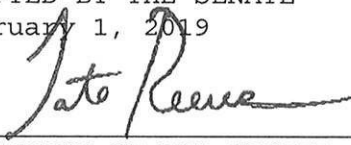
metro-area community, offering acting classes for adults and children. Contrary to national trends, New Stage audiences continue to increase. Thirty-seven thousand tickets were sold in 2018 for shows in Jackson. In 1995, its Arts Education Program won a Governor's Arts Award, adding to a long list of awards, accolades and achievements of the theatre; and

WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we pay tribute and express appreciation for the vision of Mississippi Theatre sponsors and professionals who have made Mississippi a better place and exemplify the cultural traditions of our great state:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby extend the recognition of the Mississippi Legislature to New Stage Theatre as recipient of the 2019 Governor's Arts Award for Excellence in Theatre, and extend our congratulations to a world-class production showcase on this auspicious occasion.

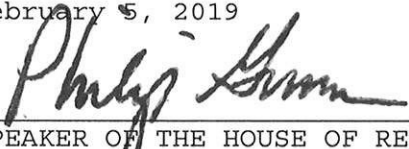
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to New Stage Theatre as part of the Governor's Arts Awards presentation and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
February 1, 2019



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 5, 2019



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES